



**OFFICE OF AGRICULTURE**

Isiah Leggett  
*County Executive*

Jeremy V. Criss  
*Director*

**MEMORANDUM**

March 13, 2017

**TO:** Agricultural Advisory Committee Members (AAC)

**FROM:** Jeremy V. Criss, Director  
Office of Agriculture

**SUBJECT:** March 15, 2017 Meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee

The Agricultural Advisory Committee will meet on **Wednesday, March 15, 2017 at the Up County Regional Services Center 12900 Middlebrook Road Germantown in Room D (Third Floor) at 7:00 pm.**

The agenda is on the next page.

The other attachments for our meeting will be posted on the Agriculture Services web site.  
<http://montgomerycountymd.gov/AgServices/agboardscommittee.html>

Due to the Snow forecast please note-If the County Schools are closed on Wednesday, the County Boards and Committees meetings for the day are also cancelled.

I hope to see you on Wednesday.

\*Sign language interpreter services will be provided only upon request with notice as far in advance as possible but no less than 72 hours prior to the event. If you need other services or Aids to participate in this activity, please call 301-590-2810

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**Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda**  
**March 15, 2017**

1. Meeting called to Order and Introductions.
2. Approval of the February 15, 2017 AAC meeting minutes.
3. The County Executive released his FY18 Operating Budget-OAG Budget on Friday. We recommended one CIP funded Position assigned to Extension Cathy Yingling be migrated back to the General Fund and this was not approved. We proposed a 2% reduction totaling \$20,190 and we learned the reduction is now \$27,249.
4. We are working on the Reclassification of Vacant MSCD Manager Position. John Zawitoski has been appointed as Acting Manager of the MSCD until the reclassification is completed and vacant position is filled.
5. The Farm Bureau-Michele Cropp and Lonnie Luther, OAG and Nancy Starkey met with Animal Services to address the issue of her Guardian dogs working on farms. Animal Services Director and staff supervisor helped resolve the matter and the dogs were returned to the farm. I offered to the Director Thomas Koenig to tour of some farms to help him better understand agriculture.
6. We released a New OAG web site and layout with a new logo, a calendar, facebook page, and Twitter feed. Please check it out and let us know what you think.
7. We have about 15 farmers that have asked to be included in a new OAG farm coloring book "*A Year in Montgomery County Agriculture*." Please let us know if you would like to be included. We want to have this available in time for the County Agricultural Fair in August.
8. There are several farms that are now offering opportunities for agricultural education and agri-tourism that we have listed on our website. During a meeting with DPS, OAG, and MCA we discussed developing Frequency Asked Questions as part of Recipes for Success for Agri-Tourism. Stay tuned for the new section on the DPS web site.
9. The County Executive vetoed the Bill 12-16 County Minimum Wage. The AAC forwarded a letter to the Council supporting the recommendations of the CE that agriculture needs to be included as an exemption for small businesses.  
The Council did not have six votes to override the veto so the bill is dead for now. The County minimum wage is currently \$10.75 per hour and it will increase to \$11.50 on July 1, 2017. The County Executive requested that \$15.00 per hour should not occur until 2022 and an exemption for small businesses.
10. In Annapolis, we are working on some bills impacting deer management in the County. HB 310-Sunday Hunting and HB 313-Archery Safety Zone Deer Hunting Bills for MC. We are working to gain support from both the Senate and House Delegations on these bills.

11.The OAG has drafted and updated Memorandum of Understandings MOUs with the University of Maryland-Extension and the Montgomery Soil Conservation District. The County Attorney's Office has reviewed the MOUs and all edits have been made. The MOUs are moving to our agricultural agency partners for execution.

12.Last Tuesday, the County Council approved Bill 31-16 Urban Agricultural Tax Credit. The OAG will be administering (accepting applications and determining eligibility, etc.) Eligibility includes residential property between ½ acre up to 3 acres, must be producing agricultural products as defined and must generate \$5,000 income from sale of products produced on the property. The Department of Finance will process the property tax credits.

13.We are still waiting on MNCPPC to move forward on the ZTA 16-02 AR Zone-TDR requirements. The MCFB, AAC, APAB, have provided comments supporting this MNCPPC staff draft ZTA that removes requirements for TDRs on dwellings that remain accessory to the farm. The OAG is monitoring the Planning Board agenda for this ZTA.

14.The next meeting of the AAC will be Wednesday April 19, 2017

#### **Upcoming Meetings and Events:**

Agricultural Advisory Committee-Wednesday March 15, 2017 @ 7:00pm

Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-March 21, 2017 @ 1:00pm

Annual Meeting for Montgomery Weed Control- March 21, 2017 @ 9:30 am

Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Directors-April 4, 2017 @ 7:00pm

Montgomery Soil Conservation Board of Supervisors-April 14, 2017 @ 12:00pm